

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 19, 2005

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff,

The FY2005 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill provides for almost \$3 billion in funding for first responders. Included in this funding is \$550 million in funding for the State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHGP). As you are aware, the distribution of this funding is guided by section 1014 of the USA PATRIOT Act. In accordance with the USA PATRIOT Act, 40% of this funding must be distributed by giving each state a minimum of .75% and each territory a minimum of .25%. The Department of Homeland Security has complete discretion over the remaining 60% of this funding.

In the first three years of this funding, the Department of Homeland Security has chosen to distribute this strictly on population and without any basis for threat. To justify this distribution, the Department of Homeland Security has pointed to report language that accompanies the Homeland Security Appropriations bill which suggested to the Department to continue this distribution practice. This year, this language has been removed and the Department of Homeland Security has been given complete discretion over the distribution of 60% of SHGP funds.

We have been pleased by your consistent statements that you support the distribution of homeland security funds strictly on the basis of risk. Congress has also been active in debating a series of proposals that would require this funding to be distributed on the basis of risk. These actions have been consistent with the 9/11 Commission's recommendation that homeland security funding be based strictly on an assessment of risk and vulnerability. Since you have discretion over such a large portion of homeland security funding, we would like a firm commitment that you will follow your public statements and distribute these funds based on an assessment of risk and vulnerability.

Sincerely,



CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress



BENNIE G. THOMPSON
Member of Congress



BILL PASCRELL, Jr.
Member of Congress

Frank Palmer, Jr.

~~Debbie Wasserman Schultz~~

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Rino Van Hullen

~~Chuck Shays~~

Russ Holt

Ray L. Allen

Janet Harman

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John L. ...

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